



ALBURY & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC BULLETIN

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477

REPORT ON THE FEBRUARY MEETING (13/2/08)

There was a good attendance to hear our guest speaker Warwick Jones tell of the history of A T Jones and the firm he established in Albury in 1933. It was a story of hard work, forward thinking and a willingness to promote a range of new technologies such as tractors, kerosene refrigerators, irrigation pumps and polythene pipe to name a few.

John Craig spoke briefly about the range of historical journals and newsletters we receive from other historical societies. John previewed several of the many historical articles in the journals including the "Shoot-out at Foggy's Hut" when Police Sergeant John Middleton cornered and captured "Darkie" Frank Gar-

diner after a furious gun fight. We realised we tend to know more about lawmen and out-laws of other nations than we do of the equally intrepid and daring in the early days of our own nation.

We trust the journals will soon be able to be read in the Library-Museum.

Eric Cosser brought along several items from his uncle Sam Cosser who operated a plumbing business in several locations in Albury. Sam had a reputation locally as an inventor.

Jan Hunter asked for information about two things: a general store at 389 Wilson Street owned by G H Hamilton; and the North Albury Croquet Club (as separate from Albury and Glenly Clubs). Jan also showed sev-

NEXT MEETING

WEDNESDAY
12 MARCH 2008
7.00pm at *Adamshurst*
David Street
Albury

The owner and restorer Garry Morgan will speak and conduct a tour of the building.

Supper will follow.
Cost \$5 per head.

Guests are most welcome.
Numbers to Jill Wooding
6021 4887 by Friday 7
March please.

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ALBURY & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC

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Minute Secretary: Jan Marsden

Committee: Helen Pithie, John Craig, Carole Whitbourn, Jill Wooding, Howard Jones and Ray Gear

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ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION

Single: \$22

Family: \$30

Corporate: \$50

History Meetings: 2nd Wednesday of the month 7.30pm at Commercial Club Albury.

Committee meets 3rd Wednesday of the month 5.15pm at Albury Library|Museum.

A&DHS website:

www.alburycity.nsw.gov.au/librarymuseum/research

eral coloured plans from a collection done by F A Stow when he was building houses in Albury in the 1920s and 1930s. Jan is working with Mrs Dulcie Cann (nee Stow) to list and conserve the collection of about 80 plans, tracings and blueprints.

Noelle Oke drew our attention to the derelict building on the NSW bank of the Murray River just south of the Union Bridge. Helen Livsey said the building was named *Brasseurville*, or the "Brewer's House." Chris McQuellin explained the property was the clubrooms of the Albury & District Car Club in the 1970s, but passed to the ownership of racing car enthusiast Bob Jane in a financial settlement. Current plans for the property are not known, but it is sad to see it continuing to deteriorate.

HISTORY OF A T JONES PTY LTD

Talk given by Warwick Jones

Alexander Thomas Jones, everyone knew him as AT, was born on the 13th January 1902 at Redfern in Sydney and passed away in July 1990. He was the third child of Alexander Thomas and Elizabeth Elaine Jones (nee Hallstrom). The Jones family moved to Kew in Melbourne in 1922 when Dad was 20. His father had been transferred there with Gordon & Gotch Publishing Company.

In Melbourne, Dad joined Cameron Sutherland Agricultural Machinery Company

that sold all agricultural equipment such as tractors, as a cashier. In 1925, he became a salesman with the firm selling tractors and pumping equipment down in the Mallee. He travelled around on a railway motorised trolley with a railway inspector who checked the tracks before the train would come through the next day. He had to travel at night to get to his destination the next day. That was the only means of travelling from one area to another back then.

In 1933, AT married a Melbourne girl. He then moved to Albury and despite it being in the depression years, decided to go into business. He rented premises from the Odewahn family at 538 Kiewa Street for 15 shillings a week and employed a staff of five.

AT Jones was agent for Mitchell farming equipment, United Insurance Co, Allis Chalmers tractors, Dunlop Milking Machines and rubber, Roseberry Petrol Engines, windmills etc. He was the only agent in the town for Neptune oil and petrol.

His premises fronted Kiewa

Street and extended along Swift Street to Woods Lane that runs between the Library-Museum and the Convention Centre. The only vehicle that the firm owned was a truck purchased from Albury Motors, now known as Baker Motors. AT Jones delivered Neptune Oil and Petrol around the district. Bob Enver was the delivery driver.

AT Jones was also agent for the first refrigerators being made in Australia. Sir Edward Hallstrom, benefactor of the Taronga Park Zoo in Sydney and who bred the white kangaroos, was A T Jones' uncle. At that stage Hallstrom was manufacturing *Silent Night* refrigerators, while AT Jones secured the sole agency for the only other refrigerator on the market, the *Electrolux* kerosene refrigerator. In one year AT Jones sold 1200 fridges and had a waiting list of 500. The factory simply couldn't keep up with demand. Some people tried to jump the queue by offering extra money.

The present site of A T Jones was purchased on the cnr of Kiewa and Stanley



Building cnr Kiewa and Stanley Streets Albury, purchased by AT Jones from the Albury Club in 1943. The building was built by Scanlons a plumbing supplies and water tank maker so the business use on the site has changed little in a century.

Streets in 1943 for £1500 from the Albury Club. The building on the site was owned and probably built about 1885 by Scanlon's from Eldorado. They operated a plumbing supply business and made water tanks.

When A T Jones needed extra finance to purchase two adjoining houses in Stanley Street from a Mrs McDonald in order to extend his warehouse, he took selected shareholders into the business. These shareholders, numbering about 20, were from Holbrook and up through the Mitta and Eskdale area. Eventually over more recent years we have brought out the other shareholders, re-establishing total family ownership.

A T Jones, having expertise in the irrigation game, decided to cater for irrigation farmers along the Murray River. Some 100s of pumps were installed from Khancoban to Swan Hill. Water was distributed through aluminium pipes. The firm employed 25 staff at its peak. In 1950 the front section of the old Scanlon building was rebuilt by Albury builder F W (Bill) Rittwag. The two houses purchased from Mrs McDonald were demolished and the bricks cleaned for reuse. I spent many afternoons after school cleaning bricks. The reclaimed bricks were used to build the retaining walls in a cellar excavated under the new warehouse area by Delaneys.

I left Albury Grammar

School after the Intermediate Certificate and joined the firm in 1960. I started at the bottom, sweeping up and cleaning the toilets. Dad had said he would support me if I wanted to continue at school, but there was a business there if I was interested. I worked my way up in the firm doing just about every job. Dad sent me to Melbourne to get some experience with McPhersons. I lasted in the city nine months then came back to Albury. I was fed up with city life.



A T Jones building on the Corner of Kiewa & Stanley Streets 2008. The building extends across a resumed lane and two house blocks in Stanley Street. Bricks from the demolished houses were used to line a large cellar in which huge stocks of polythene pipe are stored.

About 1980, I made contact with a small firm in Brisbane that manufactured polythene pipe. The demand for poly pipe was starting to grow and I was in the process of shifting our business from predominantly retail to wholesale, so I obtained the sole agency to supply poly pipe for a 200 km radius around Albury. The mark up in retail is higher, but the lower margin in wholesale is more than compensated for by turnover. The manufacturer, PPI Corporation, is now a multi-million dollar, nation-wide

company, and every bit of polythene pipe between West Wyalong, to Seymour, Shepparton to Khancoban goes through AT Jones Albury. At any one time we have \$650,000 worth of stock in our warehouse and the turnover is extraordinary - trucks in one door and out the other.

AT Jones is one of the oldest business in Albury still operating in family ownership. Recently my daughter and son-in-law joined the business, so that looks like continuing for some time yet.

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ANSWER TO QUESTION OF THE MONTH

Is Elizabeth II the longest reigning, the oldest reigning, & was she the youngest reigning British monarch?

Simple answers are No, Yes and No. On the first question Elizabeth II having reigned 54 years so far, ranks behind Henry III 56 years, Geo III 60 and Victoria 64.

On the second, she has surpassed Geo II 76 11months, Geo III 81 7 months 25 days, and Victoria 81 7 months 29 days. With this ancestry, and her mother living to 101, might we see a centenarian on the throne in 1926?

On the third part of the question, Elizabeth II at 27 was positively mature. Henry VI was only 8 months old, Henry III and Edward VI were 9 year olds. They did not assume reins of government till later. Victoria was

18 when she came to the throne.

GIFT OF PHOTOGRAPHS OF ALBURY

We have received a small collection of slides and several photographs from the family of the late Mr J A Lindner. The slides date from the late 1950s and include views of Bethanga Bridge, Hume Dam, Botanic Gardens, Dean Street, Floral Festival, Albury Show, Opening of UPA Girls Home and Opening of the Mercy Hospital.

The photographs show the Lindner house at 515 David Street and the Engineering workshop along Lindner Lane. There is also a copy of *The Merlin*, the magazine of the Albury Grammar School dated December 1938 which will be offered to The Scots School Archivist. We are grateful for the gift.

ALBURY & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY PAPERS, ISSN 1835-5455

In order to make short local history papers more widely available, the Society has applied to the National Library of Australia for an International Standard Serial Number (ISSN). This is a free service offered by the NLA. A copy of each paper produced is forwarded to the NLA and the title appears in the NLA catalogue. A copy is also placed in the Local History section of the Albury Library Museum.

ISSN is intended for short papers, say 5 to 15 pages, inexpensively bound in small numbers and intended to disseminate the research and work of members of the Soci-

ety. If you are working on a project, please speak to one of the committee. We are happy to help in bringing your work to a wider audience.

Albury & District Historical Society Papers 2008 lodged so far are:

- No 1: "The Kolb Family;"
- No 2: "Biographical Stories of North Albury Residents;"
- No 3: "North Albury Youth Club;"
- No 4: "Serving the First Ball: the beginning of Glenly Tennis Club;"
- No 5: "Albury's Forgotten Pioneer: Jacob Brann;"
- No 7: "Dr Patrick Kennedy: Australia's first Radiation Therapist," and
- No 8: "F A Stow: information & recollections from the family."

Copies may be purchased from the Society @ \$10 each.

CEMETERY WALK

Planning for the visit to the Albury Pioneer Cemetery scheduled for 13 April is in the capable hands of Howard Jones, Helen Livsey and Chris McQuellin.

If members would like to talk about someone buried in the cemetery, please contact Chris (6021 3697) so planning of the route can be done.

The walk is expected to take an hour and is to be followed by a "Thermos afternoon tea." More details next *Bulletin*.

MEMBERSHIP LIST

Additions to our list for 07/08:

Families of C & M Browne, W Moriarty, K Crossley, I Krain, J Newman.

Individual: P Harper, M Curtis, N Oke, R Braddy.

INFORMATION

Does anyone have information about a general store at 389 Wilson Street Albury, owned by H G Hamilton? Please see Jan Hunter.

HELEN PITHIE LEAVES MUSEUM

Members will be disappointed to hear that long-time museum curator and Society member Helen Pithie has accepted a redundancy package from Albury City. Helen's was one of two positions abolished in a restructure of Cultural Services Division.

Helen's efforts in the collection and display of Albury's heritage has been widely appreciated. We wish her the very best in her future endeavours and trust we will still see her again at A&DHS activities.

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The Cultural Services restructure will result in new positions with more closely focussed responsibilities. These positions are to be advertised widely.

To some extent the huge increase in visitor and user numbers at the new Library-Museum has driven the scale and scope of the restructure.

The preservation and management of the Albury City collection remains of paramount importance in the restructure plan. Storage areas, both at the Library-Museum and offsite, will be rationalised and upgraded to provide better working and storage facilities. There will be an emphasis on digitising more of the collection especially photographs, and also providing access to stored items for researchers.

REMINDER

Next meeting *Adamshurst*
David Street 7 pm
Wednesday 12 March